DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 367 500 PS 022 183

AUTHOR Heggins, Martha Jean Adams; Willis, Cheryl Crawford

TITLE A Study of Minority Early Childhood Leadership in Rural South Carolina. A Final Report.

PUB DATE 93

NOTE 30p.; Paper submitted to the Center for the Study of the Black Experience Affecting Higher Education of Clemson University (Clemson, SC, 1993).

PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Black Leadership; Black Teachers; Continuing Education; *Day Care; Early Childhood Education; *Educational Attainment; *Financial Support; Government Role; Mail Surveys; Males; *Rural Areas; School Role; *Teacher Education

IDENTIFIERS African Americans; Project Head Start; South Carolina

ABSTRACT

A study assessed the professional and educational status of the day care and Head Start personnel employed in South Carolina Health and Human Service Finance Commission early childhood programs. A total of 1,200 leadership surveys were mailed to employees of state day care and Head Start programs; 277 completed surveys were returned. The survey found that 74.7 percent of the respondents were black, and that 3.6 percent were male. A total of 59.6 percent had not completed post-high school certification or college degree programs, while 63.5 percent had not completed a Child Development Association training program. A majority of respondents ranked financial considerations as the most important barrier to continuing education, and 63.3 percent were interested in some type of formal training in early childhood education. The findings suggest that state and local educational institutions need to provide logistical and financial incentives and support for the educational advancement of black early childhood leaders in day care and Head Start programs in South Carolina. (MDM)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 367 500

A STUDY OF MINORITY EARLY CHILDHOOD LEADERSHIP IN RURAL SOUTH CAROLINA

A FINAL REPORT

SUBMITTED TO THE CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF THE BLACK EXPERIENCE AFFECTING HIGHER EDUCATION
OF
CLEMSON UNIVERSITY
CLEMSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Dixie A. Schmittou
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BY

Martha Jean Adams Heggins, Ed.D.
Professor and Coordinator of
Early Childhood Education
Department of Teacher Education
South Carolina State University
Orangeburg, South Carolina 29117

Cheryl Crawford Willis, Ed.D.
Department of Education Administration
South Carolina State University
Orangeburg, South Carolina 29117

PS 022183

South Carolina State University Fall 1993

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to assess the professional and educational status of the daycare and Head Start personnel employed in South Carolina State Health and Human Service Finance Commission (HAHSFC) early childhood programs. In short, our goal was to understand better the present and future educational and training needs of African Americans HAHSFC personnel in South Carolina early childhood programs. Our findings shed light on 1) the status of the educational and professional training; 2) pre-service and inservice needs; and 3) prospects for future training and advancement. A subsidiary purpose of the study is to prepare a case study (which will be completed in a follow-up report) containing specific suggestions and strategies to recruit and support African American Early Childhood Education Leaders for the 21st century.

A total of 1200 Early Childhood Leadership surveys were mailed to employees in the State daycare and Head Start programs. Among the 1,200 educators who were sent survey instruments, a total of 277 educators returned completed instruments. This represents a return rate of 23%.

The objective data from the survey instrument were computer-analyzed using the SPSSX (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences-Version X) mainframe computer package program facility. Selected open-ended data were manually collated and computer coded as appropriate. Initial descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, mode, median, standard deviation, SE standard deviation, variance, standard error, SE standard error, Kurtosis, SE Kurtosis, Skewness, SE Skewness, range, and minimum and maximum scores) were computed

across all forced-choice items on the instrument.

Results were as follows:

1.) Ethnically, three-fourths (74.7%) of the sample 277 early childhood educators are Black. Males comprised a mere 3.6% (10) of the total sample of subjects who returned completed survey instruments. This proportion of Black males is in keeping with present national data which indicates that there is a critical shortage of African American males in education.

2.) A substantial proportion of the educators sampled have not completed post-high school certification or college degree programs (59.6%, 165). Also, 63.5% (176) have not completed a Child Development Associate (CDA) training program compared to 79% reported nati nally.

3.) Financial aid ranks first among the six listed potential barriers or constraints to the educators' pursuit of degrees in Early Childhood Education. More that 61.7% (171) see financial aid (the lack of it) as clearly the most salient constraint to their desires to work on degrees in Early Childhood Education.

4.) The largest single proportion of the educators (33.5%, 92) would like to pursue CDA training in keeping with their desire for advanced educational training.

5.) A notable large proportion of the educators (63.3%, 174) are interested in special workshops or seminars as a source of formal training in early childhood education.

6.) Just over half (54.5%, 126) of the 231 educators who responded observe that early childhood teachers in their

centers, schools, district, or programs have coursework in Black History and culture, and are prepared to teach Black children and others about African American Heritage and Culture.

7.) The vast majority of the educators surveyed (91.3%, 253) are willing to invest their time and energy in upgrading their skills in Early Childhood Education.

In sum, the findings of this study indicates that there is a clear need for intervention by educational institutions (state and local) to provide logistical and financial incentives/support for educational advancement of African Americans early childhood leaders in daycare and Head Start programs in South Carolina. Present data suggest that in the area of Early Childhood Education, we are still nearly three decades behind other parts of the nation in program development, implementation and training. Moreover, the significant findings of this investigation point clearly to the serious need for restructuring our thinking and our support for preschool education in South Carolina. This represents a major challenge to our powers of constructive creativity in education. Indeed, the restructuring of the way we all view education, people, children, and processes in South Carolina today and in the future maybe the greatest challenge of all.

BACKGROUND

REFORM AND MINORITIES

Recent reports on education have detailed severe shortcomings regarding the results, culture, and future of American education. Projections of a critical national teacher shortage have become common place. Only recently has a more subtle deficiency in the teaching profession been recognized as a problem of national dimension - the decreasing number of minority teachers. While some have termed the projected shortage of minority teachers "a national challenge," the problem may be more accurately termed a "desperate need" (Alston, 1987).

Minority enrollment surveys indicate that there will not be sufficient Black, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American teachers to replace the already small number of current teachers from these groups. In A Profile of Teachers in the United States (Feistritzer, 1986), states that public school enrollment is projected to be one-third minority by the year 2000. Only six percent of public school teachers, according to Feistritzer, are Black while two percent are Hispanic, at a time when the number of minority children in public schools are significantly increasing.

If the present condition continues, finding Black teachers will also be a critical problem in South Carolina during the next century. The number of Black teachers dropped 25 percent during the last decade. Five years ago 21 percent of the state's teachers were Black, down from 31 percent in 1975 (Smith, 1987). Today there are less than 20 percent Black teachers in the State. Dilworth (1990) feels that the next century's teaching force will be comprised primarily of "well-educated" white women, dedicated to the profession, but unfamiliar with the ethos of the major

racial/ethnic cultures of this society.

Furthermore, according to the United States Bureau of the Census (#1019) shortly after the turn of the century, four states will have a majority of "minority" children, and two more states will have close to 50 percent minority enrollment in their public schools: 1) California, 2) Texas, 3) Florida, 4) New York, 5) New Jersey, and 6) Illinois. Several other states will approach 20-to- 30 percent minority representation in schools. Additionally, several cities and regions now have majority "minority" enrollment; but, the fastest growing areas in the United States are in the Northeast, Southwest and Southeast.

Data from the South Carolina State Department of Education (1988) indicated that the state's Black population is among the highest in the Southeastern region (40 percent of the total) exceeded only by Mississippi. Black student comprise approximately 45 percent of the total public school population, but this number increases to 99 percent in several districts. In the elementary schools, grade K-7, Blacks comprise a majority of the public school population in 48 of the current 92 school districts. These statistics heavily impact all aspect of life in South Carolina, particularly in rural areas and for "at risk" children and families.

Hatton (1988) stated that the impact of current reforms on historically Black colleges and universities is critical to any discussion of the shortage of Black teachers. While the majority of Black and minority college and university students are enrolled in predominantly white institutions, a significant share of degrees earned by Blacks is awarded by historically Black institutions. In short, colleges and departments of education at historically Black

institutions have trained and continue to train the majority of Black early childhood, elementary, and secondary teachers who work in our public schools. For example, the vast majority of early childhood and elementary teachers employed in the public schools in South Carolina graduated from a historically Black institutions; namely: 1) Allen University, 2) Benedict College, 3) Claflin College, 4) Morris College, 5) South Carolina State University and 6) Voorhees College.

Specifically, many of the reforms resulted in additional setbacks for African Americans. The raised college admission standards contributed to a precipitous decline in African American college enrollment. According to Pritchy Smith, teacher competency testing has eliminated some 38,000 teacher candidates nationwide from the ranks of certified teachers; and at a time when the minority student population is increasing to over 30 percent. It is estimated that by the year 2000 we will have less than 5 percent minority teachers.

Additionally, several states following the advice of the Carnegie Reports and Holmes Group instituted a five-year teaching degree which requires a bachelor's in liberal arts before one can get a degree in Education; eliminating many African Americans who could hardly afford to pursue the bachelor's degree with the increased tuition costs, and who usually took five-years to complete a bachelor's anyway, were now faced with the prospect of six or seven years of higher education in order to teach.

Finally, Black enrollment in teacher education programs has declined at double the rate of overall teacher education enrollments at member institutions of the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education since the initiation of various

education reform mandates; and, minority teacher candidates have much lower passing rates on required certification tests than their white counterparts. Not incidentally, then the percentage of minority teachers in the teaching force is declining - at a time when the percentage of minority pupils in the nation's schools is rising (Hatton, 1988). The fact that Blacks and other minorities are unlikely to pass required certification tests is not a "Black" problem, that is, a problem which should only concern Blacks and Black institutions of higher education; rather, it should be a professional concern according to Dr. Barbara R. Hatton, President of South Carolina State University.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES: AFRICAN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVES OF EDUCATION REFORM

African Americans did not need a Nation-At-Risk report to trigger a concern for Education. In 1983, when the country was acting as if it had just discovered deficiencies in the educational system, African Americans had to remind them that we had been documenting and protesting for a long time the mis-education of our children and youth. Several reports and actions were taken to address this issue; namely, 1) The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People convened a task force of distinguished educators to take a good look at the Nation-At-Risk report; 2) The group also reviewed a National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) report produced in 1977 entitled, "Quality Education for Black Americans: An Imperative"; 3) Saving the African America Child by the National Alliance of Black School Educators; and 4) Barriers to Excellence: Our Children at Risk.

Perhaps, it may be said that no group in the United States has

manifested a consistently greater interest in and respect for education than Black Americans. Undoubtedly, the fact that education was withheld from us for more than two centuries must have aroused our curiosity about it and stimulated an even greater desire to secure it at all costs. After slavery, when Blacks flocked to schools in huge numbers , some whites asserted that it was a fad in which Blacks would soon lose interest. This proved not to be the case; however, and Blacks continued to go to school in increasing numbers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. We did so in the face of a growing disparity between funds spent for the education of Black and white children, and even in the face of threats and intimidation designed to discourage Black children from attending school (Franklin, 1987).

DISCRIMINATION AND INEQUALITY IN EDUCATION REVISITED

As was pointed out earlier, throughout history Blacks have always placed a great deal of emphasis on education. In the Ancient Kingdom of Mali, the world's first university was established at Timbuktu. Even as slaves in North America, Blacks worked diligently to establish schools. Documents show that schools were established as early as 1798. However, racism, discrimination and the overt refusal on the part of federal, state, and local governments to provide Black children with equal education opportunities were glaring obstacles in the struggle by Blacks for education (Sessoms, 1987). From a historical perspective, great variations in educational backgrounds and achievements in South Carolina's "citizenry" (as well as other southern states) exist because of differences in racial and economic segregated school systems, ethnicity, socioeconomic

status, and gender. Such factors impact the large number of Americans who are illiterate. Most of the functionally illiterate do not read above a 5th grade level- and there is an estimated 30 million to 40 million non-reading adults in this country. There is a direct correlation between illiteracy and poverty. Poverty is the parent of school failure, job failure, etc.

For the past thirty years, many educators in the state and nation have called attention to the negative consequences and problems resulting from a system of education built on a foundation of discrimination and inequality. Consequently, two of the greatest problems confronting American education at the turn of the century are: 1) the large number of children living in poverty; and 2) differences in educational achievement based on ethnicity. The number of children who experience poverty in the United States has grown from one child in seven in 1970; to one child in six in 1980; to one child in five in 1990; and, it is headed for one child in four in 2000. That means that before the close of this century fully one-fourth of all children in this country will live in poverty (Howe, 1991).

LEADERSHIP IMPACT

The scope of the leadership crisis in South Carolina can only be fully understood when it is presented in a historical perspective. History shows that in America in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries programs for young children existed only for the privileged few. Later, upper-middle and upper-class children were the primary beneficiaries of child-oriented programs. In the early twentieth century, some day care nurseries for lower and middle class children did spring up when the United States entered

World War II (as women went to work in factories and plants), but these centers closed at the end of the war when extra workers were no longer needed.

Hodges (1978) categorized the historical phases of early childhood education in the United States (since World War II) as evolving in four periods: 1) conception (1945-57), 2) construction (1958-64), 3) revolution (1965-71), and 4) reflection (1972- development of South Carolina's early childhood education programs. The results of such an analysis are illuminating. They show that South Carolina was in the period referred to by Hodges as conception when parts of the country were already in the period called revolution. When South Carolina's progress is viewed from this perspective, it becomes evident that at present the state is approximately twenty to thirty years behind in the development and implementation of comprehensive early childhood programs. This delay has had an immeasurable impact on the lives of poor and minority children. The losses caused in children's lives by the limited growth of early education programs are only partially evident in South Carolina student's low test scores and the continued increases in incidents of crime and mental health problems (child abuse and neglect, homeless, etc.).

Harrington's (1966) provocative book The Other American (published in the construction period) brought all American's a powerful message. It exposed the scope and nature of national poverty and its horrendous consequences, and placed great emphasis on the societal need for early intervention in the lives of children at risk. This revelation, coupled with the existing political support for massive social action, (i.e., to get on with the struggle for human rights), led to passage of the Civil Rights

Act in 1964 and the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Very shortly thereafter, The Community Action section of the Economic Opportunity Act convened a panel of experts who created some very expansive goals for the "new kid on the block" - HEAD START.

From the perspective of the 90's, it may be difficult for many to realize that the preschool programs now available in South Carolina are of such recent origin. For example, prior to 1965, preschool education was primarily the province of university laboratory schools, several small national projects, parent cooperatives, scattered welfare day care programs, private programs, and a few research projects which were predominantly a part of middle or upper class experiences. Still, within the last twenty-five years the following achievements have been made in South Carolina's early childhood programs: 1) development and expansion of Head Start programs, 2) statewide public kindergarten, 3) K-3 certification for Early Childhood Education, 4) expansion of day care and family day care homes via the Department of Social Services, business and private enterprises, 5) expansion of four-year-old public preschool programs via Education Improvement Act of 1984 (EIA), and 6) limited parent education, demonstration model and family centers.

The present century witnessed that although a substantial number of minority professionals earned advanced and terminal degrees and "hold" substantial knowledge and insights [they] are seldom involved in developing educational policies and programs that are designed to assist children of their own cultural group. Never before has there been a greater need for better understanding of minority children and families in American. As we approach the end of this century and look forward with great anticipation to the

highly competitive and automated global society of the 21st century, demographic studies clearly identify that minorities and women will comprise the majority participants in our future work force (Smith, 1991).

The task of producing more and higher-quality minority teachers is identical with that of improving the social and economic studies of minority families and improving education for minority children. Programs, that upgrade schools, aids families in raising their children and gives students and families special support will help elevate many of the educational and social problems in the next millennium. Therefore, education policy makers need to maintain, upgrade, and expand programs such as Head Start, day care and other early childhood programs that address the needs and concerns of all children, but especially "at risk children and families". Finally, maintaining, upgrading, and expanding African Americans professionals in day care, Head Start and other early childhood programs and agencies will be a pipe dream unless early childhood educators and administrators in historically Black colleges and universities take the leadership Now!

METHODOLOGY

To address the questions raised in this pilot study, data was collected utilizing a survey instrument designed to gather relevant information in the following broad areas: 1) personal demographics, 2) educational and professional training, and 3) pre-service and in-service training and educational needs (ECE Survey-Appendix A). The population for this study were day care and head start personnel employed in State funded early childhood programs.

The survey instruments were mailed to the providers by a senior level administrator form that Agency. Among the reported 1,200 employees in State Health and Human Services Finance Commission early childhood programs who were sent survey instruments, a total of 277 were returned. This represents a returned rate of 23 percent.

The objective data from the survey instrument were computer-analyzed using the SPSSX (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences-Version X) mainframe computer package program facility. Selected open-ended data were manually collated and computer coded as appropriate. Initial descriptive statistics (i.e., mean, mode, median, standard deviation, SE standard deviation, variance, standard error, SE standard error, Kurtosis, SE Kurtosis, Skewness, SE Skewness, range, and minimum and maximum scores) were computed across all forced-choice items on the instrument. An expanded perspective of the currently observed status of Early Childhood Education in South Carolina (based on educator responses) was achieved through Chi-Square comparisons of the responses of subjects grouped by selected Personal (Demographic) factors to selected items of the Education and Professional Training and Training/Pre-service and In-service Needs subparts of the survey instrument.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ethnically, three-fourths (74.7%) of the sample of 277 early childhood educators are Black. Males comprised a mere 3.6% (10) of the total sample of subjects who returned completed survey instruments. This proportion of Black males is in keeping with present national data which indicates that there is a critical

shortage of African American males in education. Among the 277 educators (95.3%) who reported their chronological ages, the median age is 36 years (standard deviation, 10.2 years), where ages range from a low of 20 years to a high of 63 years. Although the distribution of subjects on chronological age are normal with respect to kurtosis or distribution peakedness (Kurtosis, -0.029, S.E. Kurtosis, .299), the subjects are significantly positively skewed on chronological age (Skewness, 0.668; S.E. Skewness, 0.150), where subjects tend to cluster inordinately in the direction of lower age ranges within the distribution (Table 1).

TABLE 1

PERSONAL-DEMOGRAPHICS
DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
TOTAL SAMPLE	277	100.0%
RACE		
Black	207	74.7%
White	65	23.5%
Other Race	5	1.8%
SEX		
Female	267	96.4%
Male	10	3.6%
AGE		
20 - 26 Years	34	12.9%
27 - 30 Years	30	11.3%
31 - 35 Years	64	24.3%
36 - 40 Years	38	18.2%
41 - 45 Years	36	13.6%
46 - 50 Years	21	8.0%
Over 50 years	31	11.7%

Median age = 36; Standard Deviation=10.2 Minimum= 20 years
Maximum= 63 years; Kurtosis=-0.029, S.E. Kurtosis= 0.299;
Skewness= 0.668, S.E. Skewness= 0.150.

Nearly half of the educators, 47.8% (132) reported their position status as Teacher, while another 42.8% (118) of the subjects sampled are Teacher's Aides. Only 9.4% (26) of the subjects are employed in some administrative capacity. Roughly half of the educators, 51.8% (133) have less than eight years tenure with their present institution or agency. Conversely, the number of years with present institution or agency range form less than one year to 26 years. Roughly half of the educators 49.2% (130) have held their present positions for fewer than five years (Table 2).

TABLE 2

TEACHING STATUS AND TENURE OF
DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
POSITION		
Teacher	132	47.8%
Teacher's Aides	118	42.8%
Administrator	26	9.4%
YEARS WITH PRESENT AGENCY		
0 - 7 YEARS	133	51.8%
8 - 14 YEARS	64	24.9%
Over 14 YEARS	60	23.3%
YEARS IN PRESENT POSITION		
0 - 4 YEARS	130	49.2%
5 - 10 YEARS	68	25.8%
Over 10 YEARS	66	25.0%

A substantial proportion of the educators sampled have not completed post-high school certification or college degree programs. Six of ten educators sampled, 59.6% (165) do not hold post-high school four years degrees, and only 22 educators, 7.9%

hold graduate degrees. Three-fourths of the 112 educators holding two years or four-year degrees, 75.9% (85) earned them from South Carolina public or private institutions. Seven of ten educators, 63.5% (176) have not completed a Child Development Associate (CDA) training program (Table 3) compared to 79% reported nationally by Dr. Wade F. Horn, Commissioner of The Administration for Children, Youth, and Families in his address at the Head Start Silver Anniversary Training Conference.

TABLE 3

PRESENT EDUCATION, CERTIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION OF DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

VARIABLE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SENIOR COLLEGE DEGREE		
Baccalaureate	112	40.4%
Masters & Above	22	7.8%
SPECIALIZED TRAINING		
CDA Certification	101	36.5%
PASSED N.T.E.		
Yes	52	20.7%
No	199	79.3%
S.C. CERTIFICATE		
Yes	66	26.3%
No	185	73.7%
PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP		
Yes	92	33.2%
No	185	66.8%

Clearly, this data shows that "workers" for the 21st century in Health and Human Service Finance Commission day care and Head Start programs are being "instructed" by educators who are the "least" prepared in the discipline of early childhood education in the State. Coupled with this fact, the children enrolled in these programs are already considered "at-risk". Moreover, this data

suggest that a major "challenge" for early childhood education is to improve the educational background and training of day care and Head Start directors, teachers, and aids.

Financial aid ranks first among the six listed potential barriers or constraints to the educators' pursuit of degrees in Early Childhood Education. More than six of ten educators (61.7%, 171) see financial aid (the lack of it) as clearly the most salient constraint to their desires to work on degrees in Early Childhood Education, followed by family or personal concerns (38.6%, 102), test-taking skills and strategies (22.7%, 63), and Special Certification Requirements (22.0%, 61). Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the items measuring the early childhood educators' perceptions of barriers to continued educational training (Table 4).

TABLE 4

BARRIERS TO CONTINUED EDUCATIONAL TRAINING DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

ITEM	PERCENTAGE & FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES	
	YES	NO
Financial Aid	61.7% (n= 171)	38.3% (n= 106)
Test-taking Skills & Strategies	22.7% (n= 63)	77.3% (n= 214)
Family or Personal Concerns	38.6% (n= 107)	61.4% (n= 170)
Off-campus Sites	14.4% (n= 40)	85.6% (n= 237)
Remedial Instruction in Basic Skills	6.9% (n= 19)	93.1% (n= 258)
Special Certification Requirements	22.0% (n= 61)	88.0% (n= 216)
Other Barriers	5.1% (n= 14)	94.9% (n= 263)

The sample of educators were asked to indicate each level of advanced educational training they would desire in the near future. Generally, aspiration toward advance training among the educators beyond their present levels of training is profoundly low. The largest single proportion of the educators (33.5%, 92) would like to pursue CDA training, and essentially equivalent proportions of the educators desire the Bachelors degree (16.7%, 46) and the Masters degree (16.5%, 48). Another 8.0% (22) of the educators wish to aspire toward the Doctorate degree, while 10.1% (28) specified Other Professional Training they wish to pursue (Table 5).

TABLE 5

ADVANCED EDUCATIONAL TRAINING INTERESTS DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

TYPE OF TRAINING	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Special Workshops/Seminars	174	63.3%
CDA Training	92	33.5%
Bachelors Degree	46	16.7%
Masters Degree	48	17.5%
Doctoral Degree	22	8.0%
Other Professional Training	28	10.1%
Summer School	52	18.9%
Full-time Study	21	7.6%
Recertification Credits	55	20.0%

A notably large proportion of the educators (63.3%, 174) are interested in special workshops or seminars as a source of formal training in early childhood education, as opposed to gaining similar educational training opportunities by attending summer school, or enrolling in a full-time college program. Recertification is an interest among 20% (55) of the educators sampled. Table 5 presents the descriptive statistics for the advanced educational training interests among the sample of South Carolina early childhood educators.

The educators were asked to indicate whether any of nine descriptive statements accurately describe staff preservice and inservice training among early childhood provider agencies. Three fourths of the educators (75.0%, 162) report that principals and/or administrators of public school-based programs for preschoolers receives basic training in early childhood education. Nearly two-thirds (64.4%, 134) of the 208 educators who responded observe that orientation of other school personnel, such as lunchroom workers, aides, and guidance counselors, is held in public school-based preservice programs to support the staff's understanding of early childhood education. The vast majority of the 246 educators who responded (90.7%, 223) concur that staff development seminars are planned and implemented at their centers, schools, or programs throughout the year (Table 6).

TABLE 6

STAFF TRAINING AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

ITEM	PERCENTAGE & FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES
STAFF TRAINING	YES OR NO
1. Principals and/or administrators of public school-based programs for preschoolers receive basic training in early childhood education.	75.0% (n=162) 25.0% (n= 54)
2. Orientation of other school personnel, such as lunch-room workers, aides, and guidance counselors, is held in public school-based preservice programs to support the staff's understanding of early childhood education.	64.4% (n=134) 35.6% (n= 74)
3. Staff development seminars are planned and implemented at my center, school, or program throughout the year.	90.7% (n=223) 9.3% (n= 23)
4. All center directors have the Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education or related field.	37.4% (n= 85) 62.6% (n=142)
5. All early childhood education teachers in my center, school, district, or program have a minimum of a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development Association Training Award.	58.5% (n=141) 41.5% (n=100)
6. An ongoing inservice training program is implemented by my center director and/or in conjunction with a larger district-wide staff development program.	93.2% (n=204) 6.8% (n= 15)

The majority of responding educators (62.6%, 142) indicate that not all center directors have the Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education or related field. A small majority of the responding educators (58.5%, 141) observe that all early childhood

education teachers in their centers, schools, districts, or programs have a minimum of a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development Association Training Award.

The vast majority (93.2%, 204) of the 219 educators who responded concur that an ongoing inservice training program is implemented by their center directors and/or in conjunction with larger district-wide staff development programs. Just over half (54.5%, 126) of the 231 educators who responded observe that early childhood teachers in their centers, schools, districts, or programs have coursework in Black History and Culture, and are prepared to teach black children and others about African American Heritage and Culture. Nine of ten (90.1%, 210) of the 233 educators who responded feel that the early childhood teachers in their centers, schools, districts, or programs are racially and ethnically representative of the children served. Just over half (51.2%, 104) of the 203 educators who responded indicate that no Career Ladder Program is implemented in their centers, schools, districts, or programs. (Table 7).

TABLE 7

STAFF TRAINING AND PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (CONT)
DAY CARE AND HEAD START PERSONNEL

ITEM	PERCENTAGE & FREQUENCY OF RESPONSES		
	YES	OR	NO
7. Early childhood teachers in my center, school, district, or program have coursework in Black History and Culture, and are prepared to teach Black children and others about African American Heritage and Culture	54.5% (n=126)		45.5% (n=105)
8. Early childhood teachers in my center, school, district, or program are racially and ethnically representative of the children served.	90.1% (n=210)		9.9% (n= 23)
9. Career Ladder Program is implemented in my center, school, district, or program.	48.8% (n= 99)		51.2% (n=104)
10. Would you be willing to invest your time and energy in upgrading your skills in Early Childhood Education?	91.3% (n=253)		8.6% (n= 24)
11. My teacher aide is adequately trained and competent for his/her position.	62.1% (n=172)		37.9% (n=105)
12. Our Early Childhood program has a well-organized parental involvement plan.	71.8% (n=199)		28.2% (n= 78)
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT			
13. Parents in the center/program are active in the review of curriculum and/or policies.	63.9% (n=177)		36.1% (n=100)
14. Parents serve on the curriculum review committee in my school.	52.6% (n=165)		47.4% (n=112)
15. A Parental Advisory Group is established and active at my school.	70.4% (n=195)		29.6% (n= 82)
16. Parental education seminars are planned and implemented to foster understanding the growth and development or young children.	62.5% (n=173)		37.5% (n=104)
17. Home visits by teachers and the center director are required in my center, school, district, or program.	59.6% (n=165)		40.4% (n=102)
18. Our center, school, district, or program has a person hired to organize the parental educational component.	52.0% (n=144)		48.0% (n=133)

The vast majority of the educators surveyed 91.3% (253) are willing to invest their time and energy in upgrading their skills in Early Childhood Education. A small majority of the educators (62.1%, 172) assess their teachers aides as adequately trained and competent for their positions. Seven of ten educators (71.8%, 199) feel their Early Childhood programs have well-organized parental involvement plans.

Close to two-thirds of the educators (63.9%, 177) report that parents in their centers/programs are active in the review of curriculum and/or policies, however, a smaller proportion (52.0%, 144) report that parents actually serve on curriculum review committees in their centers. Seven of ten educators (70.4%, 195) also report that Parental Advisory Groups are established and active at their schools, and 62.5% (173) educators feel their parental education seminars are planned and implemented to foster understanding the growth and development of young children. Six of ten educators surveyed (59.6%, 165) indicate that home visits by teachers and center directors are required in their centers, schools, districts, or programs. Essentially half of the educators (52.0%, 144) report that their centers, schools, districts, or programs have hired persons to organize their parental education components. Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics for the staff training and parental involvement at schools among the sample of South Carolina early childhood educators.

SUMMARY

Perhaps , the most significant finding of this investigation is that the majority of the early childhood education educators surveyed have limited professional credentials or educational backgrounds. For years preschool programs have been regarded as a mere "baby-sitting" function. This unfortunate regard has lead many to believe that day care, Head Start and other preschool teachers need not be as well trained as other early childhood teachers such as kindergarten and primary teachers. Subsequently, this perception has also fostered the mistaken notion that the quality of the formal education pre-kindergarten children receive from federally funded, privately owned and regulated day care and Head Start centers is sufficient. These centers typically experience extreme difficulty attracting and retaining well qualified teachers, as a direct result of low budgets, low wages, limited fringe benefits, and often poor and unsafe working conditions. Perhaps most alarming is the fact that so many underpaid and poorly educated teachers make, essentially, first contact with preschool children during the prime of these children's personality and cognitive development stages. There may be little assurance that tenants of sound psychology and contemporary educational methodologies are regarded when financial and human intellectual resources are scarce.

The data from this investigation also indicate that Black early childhood teachers are more adversely impacted by perceived barriers to continue education than are Non-Black educators.

Although, the primary source of this specific problem may be embedded in the enduring socioeconomic culture of various regions of the state and nation there is much that should be done to attend to the special needs of Black educators in America. Finally, limited financial resources for education represent a notable barrier to continued educational training among the early childhood educators sampled. If theses findings are representative, it is imperative that the State and Federal Governments, Early Childhood State Agencies, The State Department of Education, and higher education institutions combine their intellectual resources to seek financial incentive programs, fellowships, grants, forgiveness loans, etc. and/or formulate a Marshall Plan to address the problem.

CONCLUSION

The significant findings of this investigation point clearly to the serious need for restructuring our thinking and our support for preschool education in South Carolina. This represents a major challenge to our powers of constructive creativity in education. Indeed, the restructuring of the way we all view education, people, children, and processes in South Carolina today and in the future may be the greatest challenge of all!

In this technological era, the old adage that anyone can teach preschool children must be revisited. To be effective in early childhood education one needs a pedological background and understanding of 1) human/child development, 2) curriculum construction/program planning, 3) methodology, 4) knowledge of the

subject content disciplines (mathematics, language arts, science, health, technology, the creative arts) etc. Subsequently, the practitioner needs strategies for working effectively with different ethnic groups i.e., children, parents, families and the community at large. Therefore, as we move forward toward the next century, we need to be looking for the "best" prepared teachers. Simply put ... a love for children and "knowing" how to nurture will not be sufficient for early childhood teachers in the 21st century.

As a Research Fellow for the Centers For The Study Of The Black Experience in Higher Education at Clemson University, and Professor of Early Childhood Education at South Carolina State University, the Fellow desires to continue this longitudinal study gathering data on early childhood educators in South Carolina from preschool through the third grades. Also, we need to collect data on minority leadership in: 1) State Government, 2) Early Childhood State Agencies, 3) The State Department of Education, and 4) higher education institutions with early childhood degree programs and related training. A comprehensive report should be written reflecting the status of minority involvement, education and professional training. Additionally, in-service and pre-service training needs should be identified with respect to future training and an educational Marshall Plan should be developed in order to enhance the advancement of African Americans in early childhood education. Present data strongly indicates that these will be a critical shortage of minority teachers, (especially males) in the 21st century in the state and nation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, based upon the findings of the present study and those of several related investigations, the following recommendations are suggested for increasing minority early childhood leadership in South Carolina:

1. A follow-up study is critically important. We need to collect data on the current pool of minority early childhood leaders employed in the public school system i.e., four year programs, kindergartens, and the primary (first through third grade) levels.
2. We need to obtain information on minority early childhood professionals employed in:
   - 2.1 State Government
   - 2.2 Early childhood state agencies
   - 2.3 Higher education institutions i.e., colleges and universities should address inservice needs of early childhood education (particularly Head Start and daycare) programs at all levels.
3. An educational "Marshall Plan" (Model) need to be developed to enhance the advancement of Early Childhood African Americans leaders in the State and identify a potential pool of future minority early childhood leaders in South Carolina.

REFERENCES

1. Alston, D. Recruiting minority classroom teachers: a national challenge. National Governor's Association for Policy Research, Washington, D.C. 1988, 44-45.

2. Dilworth, M. E. Reading between the lines: teachers and their racial/ethnic cultures. ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, D. C. 1990.

3. Feistritzer, C. E. Profile of teachers in the United States. National Center for Education Information, Washington, D.C.

4. Franklin, J. H. The desperate need for black teachers. The Helen Dwight Reid Education Foundation c/o Change, Washington, D.C., 1987, 44-45.

5. Hatton, B. R. A game plan for ending the minority teacher shortage. National Education Association Journal, 1988, 66-69.

6. Harrington, M. The other America. New York: McMillan, 1966

7. Hilliard, A.G. The changing black teacher and diminishing opportunities for black teachers. Proceedings of the National Invitational Conference on Problems Related to the Survival of Black Public School Teachers. Norfolk, Virginia: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 212 565, 1980.

8. Hodges, W. L. & Sheehan R. Evaluation: strategies for generating knowledge", New Direction In Program Evaluation.
San Francisco, Jessey Bass, 1988.

9. Howe, H. America 2000: a bumpy ride on four trains. Phi Delta Kappan, 1991, 73, 193.

10. Sessoms, I. Black students im higher education. Education and Social Research Journal, 1987, 2-5-18.

11. Smith, A. Outreach program would bolster work force. The State Newspaper. Columbia, S.C., September 20, 1991.

12. Smith, S. South Carolina needs black teachers. The State Newspaper. Columbia, S.C., January 23, 1989.

13. Willis, C.C. The status of early childhood leadership in South Carolina: retrospective and projection. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, South Carolina State University, 1992.

14. U. S. Bureau of the Census. Population Report # 1019